A DESPERATE AND DANGEROVS DESIGNE DISCOVERED CONCERNING The *FEN-COUNTRIES*;

BY

A faithfull friend, who as ſoone as it came to his knowledge, hath taken ſome pains, not only to diſcover, but to prevent the ſame; By order of the Committee for the

FENNS.

Publiſhed for the Common-good, and in all humility preſented to the High Court of *PARLIAMENT.*

And in particular to ſome Noble Perſonages eſpecially interreſſed and concerned therein.

LONDON,
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JUNE 1, 1916

TO THE

HIGH COVRT OF PARLIAMENT.

Moſt great and Honourable Senate:

I Shall not need to tell you what damages hath happened to the Common-wealth by ſome Projectors of late, who have pretended as faire to his Majeſty, as Sir Cornelius Vermuiden *hath done in this his Deſigne; Your wiſdomes have found them out, and ſent them packing: And if it ſhall appeare by what is briefly ſet forth in theſe following lines, that this Deſigne is as dangerous, and may prove as hurtfull to the ſubjects as any of the former; I doubt not but your Wiſdomes and Juſtice, will be ſo far from giving power by Law, for the purſuance of ſuch a Deſigne, that you will prevent the hurt and danger (being diſcovered) that may come thereby: Let not my meanneſſe or unworthineſſe cauſe what I have here done to be ſlighted; Once a poore Iſraelitiſh maide made knowne to a great Aſſyrian Lord, how he might be cured of his Leproſie, which was neither ſleighted by him, nor by that great King, but ſet them both on worke, and much*

much good came thereby: And ſhould I now have beene ſilent, being timely invited, (as one amongſt others whom it may concerne) both to make exceptions againſt it, and to offer any other deſigne (beſides my own particular ingagement calling me thereto by that loſſe I have already, and ſhall hereafter ſuſtaine) I ſhould have beene conſcious to my ſelfe, (not only of being no great friend to my country, but alſo of furthering this his deſign than otherwiſe, by not putting in execution what I by practiſe and experience knew might any way conduce to the preventing of ſo great, ſo eminent danger; threatning not onely one, or two, or a few private perſons in particular, but whole townes, nay whole countries too in generall: I ſhall heare ſay no more, but daily pray, that God will aſſiſt you, and give you happy ſucceſſe in all your great undertakings.

EDMUND SCOTTEN.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM

EARLE OF *BEDFORD*, and his Honourable friends

Adventurers in the great levell

of *FENNES*.

Right Honourable,

IF I *should now be silent, I should not know how to frame my self an excuse: Having heretofore beene a servant to the Right Honourable, the Earle of* Bedford, *& his Honorable friends in the drayning: And well observing how one Mr.* Hill *who had then power put into his hands, did begin to go a wrong way to work upon* Wisbeech *River; which so soone as I perceived, I made it knowne, and al-*

though some money was expended that way by him before I could prevent it, yet I saved them a 1000. pounds. And can I now be silent when by speaking I may not onely save 1000. but many thousands, in preventing the pursuance of a desperate desigue, which the Honorable Committee for the Fens have ordered to be printed, that whosoever it concernes might make exceptions against it; silence in this case might give the Parliament and your Lordships just cause to approve thereof, which promise so faire, and to which none could take exceptions, though invited to it. I have therefore with all faithfulnesse, briefly laid open the danger, which in all humility I present unto your Lordships, that the danger being discovered, which before lay hid under faire promises and pretences, may be avoided: And now whether these my [illegible] can here prove acceptable or no, I know not. Yet however, I have declared my opinion, and left it extant, that future times may witnesse that the danger was discovered. For my owne part I am confident, that if this designe be pursued, what I have now written, one day by costly experience will be found to be true.

Yours Honours to serve
to his utmost,

Edmund Scotten.

Certaine exceptions against Sir *Cornelius Virmuden* his deſigne,

for the drayning of the Fens, with Queries upon each paſſage:

As alſo divers arguments, drawne from the workes by him already made, and ſuch as are propounded by him to be made, which ſhew the deceitfulneſſe of his deſigne, that it cannot make a perfect drayning.

With ſome ſhort rules in generall, how they may be drayned and preſerved from inundation.

ACcording to an Order the 25. of *February*, I have made ſome exceptions, againſt Sir *Cornelius Virmuden* his deſigne, as I finde it in divers paſſages of his booke, with queries upon each paſſage, and from them, and ſome workes already done by him, I have framed ſome Arguments whereby it may evidently appeare, that although hee promiſeth to draine the Feunes, and ſeemes to take care that none be wronged thereby, yet in purſuance of his deſigne, he will not be able to performe the former,

mer, nor make good the later, and also have shewed how the greatest part of the Fennes may bee made winter grounds, and Navigation preserved, and no man wronged nor indangered, and the charge not so great, but that the Fennes will abunly requite the cost.

1. Pa. 2. li. 20. He sets downe 400000. Acres of Fenne Lands, which being made winter grounds, would be an unexpected benefit of six hundred thousand pounds *per annum*, and upwards, which is more by one halfe then ever they will, as the rates of Landes now goe.

Quer. Whether this be not a bad beginning at first dash, to misinforme his Majestie, of purpose to worke his affections the more to the drayning, and that so as Sir *Cornelius* might have the better allowances.

2. Pa. 5. li. 29. He saith it is apparant that in processe of time, the Outfalls of *Wisbitch* and *Welland*, will utterly decay, and that for want of water, Pa. 5. li. 23. pa. 14. li. 6. and yet pa. 13. li. 30. he will take away part of *Glean*, and all *Welland*, to *Mortons Leame*, and so to *Wisbitch*: and yet have water enough to keepe open the Outfall of *Welland*, pa. 18. li. 11. And yet one reason why he turnes the water of *Welland* to *Wisbitch*, is because that thereby he will gaine and keepe open a good Outfall for *Neene*.

Quer. Whether, first these severall passages doe not contradict each other; secondly, if it be apparant, that the Outfall of *Welland* will decay because there is no more water put to it, how can

that

that Outfall be maintained, when part of *Glean*, and all *Welland* is taken from it.

Pa. 14. li. 21. He tels how he will maintaine it, his words are, And by this meanes the old Channell of *Welland* will become very usefull to the countrey, by the Sasse or Navigable Sluce to be set at *Waldron* Hall, for Navigation to water the countrey in Summer time, and to scoure the Outfall, and pa. 22. li. 6. and if need be, the sooner to gather head by meanes of the Sluce and Sasse, which are to be below it, on *Welland*, to scoure the Outfall. 3.

Whether that a Sluce placed 10. or 12. miles from the Outfall to scoure it, be not a conceipt so vaine and ridiculous, that it deserves no farther answer. Quer.

Pa. 15. li. 9. He hath another helpe which is the downefall of *Deeping* and *Thorney*, his words are, If it were not to preserve Navigation for *Spaulding*, it were not amisse to bring all the downefall of *Deeping* and *Thorney* through *Ellow*, and so to *Wisbitch* Outfall by a new channell, and this is another remedy. 4.

The first, if he cannot make use of it, but hee will want water to preserve Navigation for *Spaulding*, how is it another remedy? Or whether will he turne the downefall of *Deeping* and *Thorney*, through *Ellow*, and so to *Wisbitch* Outfall by a new Channell, though he doe destroy Navigation to *Spaulding*. Quer.

The second, whether the downefall usually in Summer time be not so little, that the very bot- Quer.

tome of the Dikes be dry, and will not then *Spaulding* Outfall Sand quite up, and for winter time (if the Fennes be drained) will not the downefall be low in the Dikes of *Deeping* Fens, two foote, or at least one, under the superficies of the Fennes; and Sir *Cornelius* ſaith, pa. 15. li. 3. *Deeping* Fennes are very low, and yet the downefall muſt runne lower hee will confeſſe, then what force can this downefall have to ſcoure the Outfall, and preſerve Navigation for *Spaulding*, is not this if well conſidered, of as ſtrange a conceipt, as that a Navigable Sluce at *Waldron* Hall ſhould doe it?

Quer.

Thirdly, if it be apparant that the Outfalls of *Wisbitch* and *Welland* will decay by the increaſe of Sands, as now they are, when they have ſo much freſh water to keepe them open, that ſometimes it cannot be conteined between the bankes, then how ſhall the water that muſt come through the Sluce at *Waldron* Hall, and the downefall of *Deeping* and *Thoney*, which is lower then it preſerve Navigation for *Spaulding*, or keepe open the Outfall of *Welland*.

Sur.

Pa. 23. li. 26. He ſaith *Welland* and the Shire *Drayne*, will be turned to be good ſervants, in ſtead of ill maſters.

Quer.

Whether by this way Sir *Cornelius* hath ſet forth, it be not moſt certaine that *Welland* will doe no ſervice at all, no not ſo much in Summer time as carry the ſmalleſt boate, nor any part of the downefall.

6.

Pa. 23. li. 11. He ſaith the Fen waters for that

part

part of the countrey, muſt goe part to *Crowland*, and ſo by *Spalding*, to the Sea, and by *Munro Plaſh*, as need ſhall require: And if the fall can be gained at *Guyhurne*, part may goe by *Wisbitch*, otherwiſe *Welland* and *Plaſh* muſt remaine the onely draines for the downefall, which are not ſufficient to receive it.

Whether this (like many other paſſages in his booke) be not very uncertaine, obſerve his words (if the fall can be gained at *Guyhurne*) but if not, *Welland* and *Munro Plaſh* muſt be the only draines, which he ſaith are not ſufficient to receive it; So that if the fall cannot be gained at *Guyhurne*, this muſt remaine an imperfect worke; but then if the Outfall of *Welland* be quite ſanded up, then he hath but *Munro Plaſh* alone, and if two be not ſufficient, what will one of them doe? Quer.

Pa. 26. li. 8. He ſaith it may be objected, that the inhabitants of *Peterborough* have Navigation from their towne to *Linne* by the River *Neene*, as now it runneth, which will then be taken away; he anſwereth, that the workes being thus contrived, they ſhall not need to fetch and carry their commodities ſo farre, but goe the neareſt way to *Wisbitch*. 7.

Whether this ſatisfactory ſeeming anſwer (to omit here the dammage *Linne* may ſuffer thereby) doth give any ſatisfaction at all: if he meane they ſhall goe to *Wisbitch* and ſo by the Sea to *Linne*, then whether theſe watermen, and their veſſells be fit for a Sea voyage or no, if not, then what ſhall the inhabitants of *Peterborough* doe, Quer.

untill the two rivers meeting above have ground out the Channell, that *Wisbich* may be made an Haven towne. May not his bankes placed at such a great distance be broken, or rome, and cut, as they were this last winter, and then how many yeares may the inhabitants of *Peterborough*, part of *Northampton*, *Leicester shire* and *Rutland*, waite by a tedious expectation untill *Wisbich* may serve their turne, as *Linne* now doth, what shall they doe in the meane time?

8. Pa. 29. li. 6. He saith *Owse* may not goe downe the Fennes as now it doth, but the best way is to turne the River at *Erith*, into, and the next unto *Bedford* River, and to shut the passage of *Owse*, as now it goeth by a crosse banke through the River to the firme land. and li. 28. the three Rivers of *Mildenhall*, *Brandon* and *Stoake*, must bee made one River.

7. And to that end *Mildenhall* must bee brought into *Brandon*, and both into *Stoake*, and all into *Owse*, and in that manner, that the downefall of the Level may be brought through a draine, to be made to a better fall then that of *Stoake* for the downefall of *Graunt* to goe in.

Quer. Whether when old *Owse* is stopped and *Mildenhall*, *Brandon*, and *Stoake*, bee turned another way, and fall into *Owse* neere *Stow Bridge*, as is set forth in the Mappe, at the end of his booke, whether then the Tides which now flow up in Summer time foure miles above *Ely*, will not then flow up into old *Owse* also, as farre as his stop at *Erith*, and into the other Rivers of *Mildenhall*

and *Brandon*, which their will be emptie, and fill them with Sand, causing them in short time to be so much sanded up, that they will not doe so much as carry away the downefall, having no quantitie of fresh water, to carry out their Sands againe.

Second, whether when all *Owse* is stopped at *Erith*, and must not come into old *Owse* againe, untill it come to *Salters Load*, and *Mildenhall*, *Brandon*, and *Stoake*, must not come into *Owse*, untill a little above *Stow Bridge*, and all *Neene* turned to *Wisbitch*, so that for above 30. miles space, there will be but *Grauns* onely, which in Summer time will scarce cover the bottome of the old *Owse*, can there possibly be a foote of water in many places, will there be six inches of water upon *Ely* Hards which are shallow and broad; and what a designe is this, to deprive *Cambridge*, *Linne*, *Wisbitch Spaulding*, *Ely* and *Peterborough*, of Navigation, and doth it not greatly behoove those great townes of Navigation, and countries about them, to seeke in time to prevent the prosecution of such a designe?

Quer.

Pa. 5 li. 23. Hee confesseth that the sands in Summer time now overcome the Ebbes somewhat in *Linne* haven, yet hee saith they doe not lie long, for the first land waters or next spring tides carry them away.

9.

If the next spring Tides will doe it, how is it apparant that the Outfalls of *Wisbitch* and *Welland* will utterly decay by the encrease of the Sands, for want of fresh waters, Pa. 5. li. 29. and how

Quer.

how is that the Sands now in *Linne* Haven overcome the Ebbes in Summer time, doe not the Spring Tides keepe their constant course all Summer long?

10. Pa. 5. li. 28. The first land waters or next spring tides carry out the Sands againe.

Quer. Whether it is not plaine and manifest by his owne confession above, that the Spring Tides will not carry out the Sands they bring in, though here hee would make his Reader beleeve they will, can any thinke hee would have so contradicted himselfe, if he had thought his designe should have beene printed, that whom it concernes might make exceptions to it, but if the Spring Tides faile, he saith the first Land waters will doe it, pa. 5. li. 28. but then is it not most plaine by his booke, and by the workes set forth in the Mappe at the end of the booke, that hee will take away those land waters, part of *Glean*, and all *Welland*, and from *Spaulding*, and *Neene* wholly from *Linne* and stop *Owse* and *Maldenhall*, and *Braudon* and *Stoake*, and turne them another way, and leave no land waters in these Rivers for many miles together but only *Graunt*, must it not then follow by his owne confession, that these Rivers will be sanded up, and so not Navigation onely destroyed, but the Rivers spoyled that they will not so much as carry away the downefall.

11. Pa. 26. li. 4. He saith, and for instance the *Owse* from *Littleport* to *Linne*, keepes his depth, by reason of the backe waters.

What

What backe waters doth he meane? If he meane *Mildenhall* and *Braudon*, and the *Ouse* above *Littleport*, which are backe waters from *Lynne* and *Littleport*, these he shewes you plainly he meanes to take away. And then if these backe waters were the cause, as here he confesseth, that *Ouse* keepes his depth now betweene *Littleport* and *Lynne*, then must it not needs follow, when these are taken away, the *Ouse* will loose his depth, and Sand up; what needs we any other witnesse in this, he himselfe hath confessed it, both here and elsewhere, pa. 5. li. 29. the mischiefe that will follow upon it. Quer.

Pa. 7. li. 11. he adviseth not to goe the ordinary way of drayning to avoyd inconveniences of great and vast expences, many difficulties of inundations, which otherwise would depend thereon; and pa. 9. figure 1. for these reasons. 12.

First, that the workes may be made at a farre lesse charge.

Secondly, that they will stand with more safetie and no hazzard of inundation, and so become habitable.

Thirdly, not subject to halfe that reparation.

Fourthly, and the land of a farre better value, then the other way.

If the contrary of all these be made to appeare most evident, then whether for all these faire pretences, this be not the true cause he will not goe the ordinary way. Quer.

First, because he would seeme to have more skill in drayning then others.

Secondly,

Secondly, and so indeare his service that hee might have more money yearely for his pay.

13. Pa. 10. figure 3. He saith, that bankes so much as may be are to be laid out from the moorish grounds, and pa. 12. li. 13. bankes made of moorish ground, chargeable and dangerous.

Quer. Then why doth he himselfe swerve so much from his owne rules, for may not the waters of *Glean* and *Welland* be sent to the Sea betwixt bankes made of Clay and other indurable earth, with such force and strength, that will cause and keepe open a good Outfall, with helpe of a Sluce placed below *Spaulding*? And yet hee adviseth to turne *Stow* brooke, part of *Glean*, and all *Welland* into *Neene*; and all these waters in time of greatest floods must be sent betwixt two Bankes made of light Moore and Hassockes, betweene *Eldernell* and *Guyhirne*, is not this a very dangerous way even by his owne confession here?

14. Pa. 10. figure 4. Hee saith, Rivers are to bee carried on the highest grounds where possibly they may be, yet he will have *Glean* and *Welland*, which may possibly goe to *Spaulding* Outfall, and make it very good, being as he saith the higher grounds, to goe to *Neene*, and so that way to the Sea, which he confesseth to be lower, pa. 17. li. 8. where it cannot possibly goe, as after will appeare.

Quer. Whether in this also hee doth not contradict himselfe.

Pa. 7. li. 14. He saith the Townes of *Peterborough*, *Erith* and many others, standing upon the upper

upper ends of the Rivers, and but low, would be thereby ſometimes drowned, unleſſe great forelands, and receptacles be.

Whether for all this ſeeming care for them they will not be drowned more then they had wont, the waters being reſtrained of their former libertie by new bankes, and beſides the loſſe and dammages they may ſuſtaine by drowning their houſes, and *Tilth* fields, by reſtrayning the water and houlding it up; It may prove very hurtfull to their Cloſings and Meddowes in Summer times, when any flood ſhall come floating, and ſpoyling their Graſſe, more then formerly, and then doth it not much concerne the ſix Counties to cry downe ſuch a deſigne as this? *Quer.*

Pa. 29. li. 14. (He ſaith) and to the end the water of *Owſe* ſhould not anoy the Country any further, the ſaid *Bedford* River is to be imbanked on each ſide thereof to keepe *Owſe* within certaine bounds, the bankes thereof muſt bee a great diſtance the one from the other, ſo that the water in time of extremitie may goe in a large roome to keepe it from riſing too high; and the more becauſe there is a great diſtance of about 25. miles from *Erith*, before it comes to the perfect fall. 16.

Whether here he ought not to have ſet downe how farre diſtance the bankes are to be made the one from the other, whether a quarter, or halfe a mile, or a whole one, or two, or three, or more, or leſſe. And then how high the water will riſe betweene his bankes, that the inhabitants of *Quer.*

Maine and *Welnigh*, might know how deepe they ſhall be drowned in their houſes, whether foure or five or ſix or ſeaven foote deepe, And their new repaired Chappell at *Welnigh*, which had lately a gathering for, through many Counties; whether they muſt not remove their Miniſters reading Pue, and their owne as high or higher then their Pulpit is now; And that likewiſe *Meepall* men on the other ſide, might have knowne how high they ſhould be drowned in their Chappell, and houſes, that they might have time to remoove them higher upon the hill ſide.

17. Pa. 5. li. 3. p. 10. li. 1. He ſaith that the great Level of Fens is broad and of great extent, and flat with little or no deſcent of its owne, and growne full of Haſſockes, Sedge, and Reede, and the waters goe ſlowly away from the Lands, and out of the Rivers they come ſwift into, and upon it, out of the upland Countries; And pa. 10. figure 2. the level is of great extent, 20. miles at leaſt from the upper ends to the fall. And yet he ſaith becauſe he ſets his bankes at ſo great a diſtance the waters will not riſe high againſt them, pa. 23. li. 3. pa. 29. li. 20.

Quer. Whether here is not guile or ignorance, guile in that he ſaith the waters will not riſe high, when it is moſt certaine they will, ignorance if he thinkes as he ſaith, for they will riſe 6. or 7. foot high betweene his bankes, at leaſt, when the floods are foure or five foote over the ſuperfices of the Medowes, there needs no other proofe but his owne confeſſion in theſe words that the Level

vell is flat with little or no deſcent of its owne, and the waters goe ſlowly away, and come ſwift into and upon the Fens from the upland Countries, now is it not moſt evident that where waters have a great fall that they cannot goe backe againe, and a wide and ſwift paſſage into a levell betweene bankes, and a ſtraite and narrow paſſage from that flat to the Sea: So that the water cannot by reaſon of ſuch narrow paſſage and the the tides, goe above halfe ſo faſt out of the Fennes to the Sea, as it comes into them: muſt it not needs follow in every mans judgement that at ſuch times, though his banks be 10. foote high, ſuch floods will riſe within two foote of the top, but if this be not plaine enough, By an example I am able to make it appeare, to him that hath the leaſt inſight into ſuch things.

Pa. 6. li. 13 He ſaith the countries of *Marſhland*, *Wisbitch* and *Holland* are fenced by bankes from the waters of the Fens, and ſometimes they have beene overflowed by the ſaid waters and have often beene in great danger, and they are at continuall charge for the maintenance of the ſaid Bankes. And yet he cannot deny but theſe bankes are made of Clay and other indurable Earth, and the waters had liberrie to ſpread over all the great levell of Fens and aroſe not at any time above three foote in height over the levell. 18.

Whether the conſideration of this truth ought not to have kept him from attempting ſuch a deſigne as this? for might hee not from hence have drawne this concluſion, and that truly, *Quer.*

if banks made of good earth have bin sometimes broken and the Lands overflowne to unspeakeable losse. And are often in great danger, and they are at a continuall charge to maintaine them, and then the water but low, having scope to disperce over all the great levell; what a vaine designe is mine that I should perswade to turne three Rivers into one to be carryed to the Sea betweene Bankes made of light Moore and Hassocks which will never be able to hold when six or seven foot of water shall rise in heighth betwixt them. But if the windes blow, (as seldome they doe not when the waters are at highest) will be sure to be broken and torne to peeces, And then what will become of me, and my designe, wherein I have pretended to his Majestie, and other great Lords, a farre lesse charge, and more safetie, and no hazzard of inundation, and better for habitation, and make the lands be of a better value, when they shall finde by costly experience the contrary of all these to be true.

19. Pa.8.li.19. He saith the Levell would become surrounded and so without perfection from within, and by the waters without, the bankes will lie in continuall danger of inundation for want of a good fall in the winter, and by a Windecatch breake and undoe all againe.

Quer. Whether the Serious consideration of this also ought not to have staid him in presenting this designe and have caused his thoughts to have reasoned thus; If when the Levell is but surrounded a little wanting perfection from within, and

tinuall

by the waters without the bankes, will be in continuall danger of inundation, and by a wind catch, breake and teare all the bankes to peeces, and so undoe all againe: What will become of my bankes in time of such Wind-catches, when the waters will rise 6. or 7. foot betweene them how will they be torne and broken, and all undone again: And then what may the charge be to make them up the next Summer? And they will be broken and torne and undone againe the next winter: And so every Summer, as long as money will last they may be made up, and every winter be undone againe, and then where is farre lesser charge, and where is safety from inundation, and where will they become habitable, and of what value will these lands be of? And then lastly how shall I looke for any favour from his Majestie, and those Lords whom I have deceived they trusted to my skill and honesty, and I shall proove no better then some cheater or Mountebanke to them, sure I will never doe this, though for the present it might gaine mee a thousand pounds a yeare. 20.

Pa. 12. li. 7. And in case all the Rivers should be inned and fenced with bankes to free the lands, and that great distances should be left betweene banke, and banke, yet still it must bee confessed that a multitude of bankes in this levell must be made through Mootish grounds, in length about 70000. rodde which would be very chargeable and dangerous, And (if all be considered) impossible that way to make a sure worke.

Quer. Whether here hee doth not plainely confesse bankes made to fence lands with great distances betweene them, made through Moorish grounds are dangerous, and (if all be considered) impossible that way to make a sure worke, doth not this confession then confute, or at leastwise contradict what he said before, pa. 9. figure 2. that they will stand with more safetie and no hazzard of inundation, for though he may seeme to lessen the charge by avoyding multiplicitie of Bankes, yet here can be no colour to lessen the danger, but make it more unavoydable, because he will turne two or three Rivers into one, which will charge his Moorish Bankes farre more then one single River. And by what might be said concerning the charge of his bankes, and his cuts through hard and stony grounds, and the maintenante, it would plainely appeare that if his designe were followed it would prove intollerable for charge.

21. Pa. 25. li. 3. He saith it is needfull to make the opening of *Wisbitch* River in a larger manner then now it is, but forbeares to set downe how farre in length he will inlarge it, how broad and deepe he will make it, and the charge with the purchase of those lands he must cut, worth 20. shillings an Acre *per annum*, that the charge might appeare, and that others might discerne whether that Outfall will conveigh three Rivers to the Sea, in time of greatest floods before the Bankes above be torne and broken to peeces.

Quer. Whether in stead of imitating nature, pa. 13.

li. 1. doth he not in this and divers other darke paſſages rather imitate the popiſh Clergy, who keepe men as ignorant as they can, that they may the more eaſily deceive them, and leade them whether they liſt.

Pa. 25. l. 25. It ſhall not be widened any more, the two Rivers meeting, will grinde the channell through the Marſh, and make *Wisbitch* an Haven towne like that of *Linne*, though not in ſuch meaſure of wideneſſe. 22.

If his two Rivers ſhall lie 7. or 8. foot high betweene his Bankes made of light Moore, and Haſſockes, untill it have grinded the Channell 4. or 5. miles through the Marſh, how often will thoſe bankes be broken and torne to peeces before the Channell bee ground out, and when they are torne and broken to peeces, will not both the Fennes be drowned, and the water loſt that ſhould doe the buſineſſe? *Quer.*

Pa. 24. he tels his Majeſtie that he would make a Banke from *Stand Ground* to the fields of *Wittleſeii*, and from *Eldernell* to *Guyhurne* on that ſide. 23.

But as it is verily beleeved by many, that hee might be revenged on Maſter *Burrell* who would not ſtoope to him, he hath cauſed a banke to bee made on the ſame ſide through his ſeverall, and others, in length two miles nearer *Wisbitch*, by which meanes he hath not onely wronged Mr. *Burrell* and others many hundred pounds for the preſent, and cut up *London Roade*, to the pittifull toiling of Travelours, and deprived others of his

Majeſties

Majesties Subjects wholly of their high way, but hath indangered the utter ruining of Master *Burrell* and others, and the drowning of whole townes and Churches, not caring, though hee spent his Majestie many thousand pounds in vaine, to teach Master *Burrell* and others hereafter not to oppose him.

Quer. Whether this be not *Haman*-like, because *Mordecay* would not stoope to him, he was not contented to be revenged on *Mordecai* alone, but upon all the Jewes, though he in no wise was able to recompence the Kings dammages by his wicked act.

AND now having spent some time in reading and taking some Notes out of his booke, and finding how one part of it crosseth and contradicts another; And if some part of it be true, the other must needs be false, and so needs no other proofe to confute it, but his owne words I might rest here, but because this way of keeping water aloft betweene bankes set at a great distance is of such dangerous consequence not onely to such as shall be the adventurers, but to the inhabitants adjoyning neare to such bankes, and having such plentifull matter to make it evident to all men, to be a most deceitfull way, and the money so expended to be utterly lost, altogether failing of the end it shall be disbursed for, namely the drayning of the Fens, I shall adde to what I have already observed in his booke 3. or 4. Arguments

gumentes more, firſt from the coſtly experience of others, the next from his owne workes alreadie done, and laſtly from his proceedings and propoſitions ſet forth in this deſigne.

It is moſt apparant by what hath beene already ſaid, that when the land floods ſhall deſcend from *Northampton*, *Bedford*, or other upland countries: and ſhall ariſe in height 4. or 5. foote over the Superfices of the Medowes, they will ariſe 6. or 7. foote high betweene his Bankes, though placed at a great diſtance betweene them; and when the waters are thus aloft neare the top of the bankes the winds will have ſuch power to raiſe violent waves againſt them, that will breake and teare them to peeces, they being made of light and ſpungie ſtuffe. And that they will doe ſo, all indifferent men that have experience of the Fennes will witneſſe with me.

It is well knowne there was a banke made betweene *Upwell* and *Welnigh*, about foure miles in length, made to preſerve Fens called the *Londoners* Fennes, which Banke by its often tearing, breaking and blowing up after great ſummes of money expended, it wearied out the undertakers; And yet the waters aroſe not at any time above three foote in height in the Levell againſt that Banke; they having libertie to ſpread themſelves over the great Levell of the Fennes, from whence I draw this concluſion.

That if a Banke made in the ſame Fens which coſt many thouſand pounds, and but foure miles in length could not bee made to hold, but was

torne in peeces, broken and blowne up, and but 3. foot of water against it, whereby those undertakers (though men of great estates) were forced to leave them and loose all their labour and cost.

Then the Bankes made by Sir *Cornelius* being of no better stuffe, when 6. or 7. foote of waters shall with violent waves beate against them, cannot possibly hold, but will be torne in peeces, broken and blowne up.

But what neede I instance in Bankes of like nature, for this very Banke which Sir *Cornelius* hath already made was so neare breaking and blowing up this yeare that it hath cost much money in bringing Earth, Brush, Faggots, and Fodder, sheaves, and many hundred of Fir deales cut to preserve it. And yet was dangerously torne, in so much, that if one living neare unto it, had not espyed it one Lords day at night, little before his going to bed, and called up neighbours out of their beds, and road to *Wisbitch* for more helpe: in their judgements in one two houres it had been broken, and had not onely drowned *Walderseii*, but *Wisbitch* and *Elme*.

From whence I frame this argument, that those Bankes that will not hold one yeare but require good cost to preserve them; And yet that cost would not preserve them from tearing, nor secure them from breaking, when the waters had libertie to spread, and so could not rise high, whereby the windes might have power to raise violent waves against them, cannot possibly hold when the waters shall be pent up betweene two

bankes

bankes, and ſo lie high againſt them.

But the new Banke Sir *Cornelius* hath cauſed to be made in *Walderſeii*, hath had great coſt beſtowed upon it by bringing, Earth, Fodder, Sheaves, Bruſh, Faggots, and cutting many hundred of Deales to preſerve it, and yet was feareſully torne, and in great danger to breake untill it was cut in a convenient place, or two, above, notwithſtanding the waters had ſcope to ſpread themſelves over 30. thouſand Acres, whereby they could riſe to nothing neare that height they will, when reſtrained of that liberty.

Therefore the bankes made and propounded to be made by Sir *Cornelius Virmuden* cannot poſſibly hold long, nor ſecure the Lands adjoyning.

But that banke did not breake nor blow up, and Sir *Cornelius* is taken for a man of judgement and experience; ſure he would never have been ſo bold as to perſwade his Majeſty and other great Lords, and now the Parliament to diſburſe ſuch great ſummes of money, if he did not well know his workes would hold, and cauſe a perfect draining. *Object.*

The cauſe that banke did not breake hath been ſhewed ſufficiently already: But for further anſwer hereto, I ſhall frame two or three arguments more; And firſt, from his Bankes and Sluce, that were not only torne and in great danger, but broken and blowne up, which he was intruſted to make on the Salt Marſhes; Thus, *Anſwer.*

That he that ſhall be entruſted to make bankes for preſerving of Marſhes intended to be plowed

and sowne, which Marshes, if kept dry, the first Crop might have been worth 5 *li.* an Acre: if he shall make such bankes as shall be torne and broken, and thereby those Marshes drowned, may well be suspected to want judgement or care fit for such a trust.

But thus it hath fared with those Bankes Sir *Cornelius* hath been intrusted by his Majesty to make on the Marshes aforesaid, intended to bee plowed and sowne.

Therefore his judgement or care may be justly suspected in matters of so great concernment.

Another argument of this kinde if needed, might be framed from his Sluce he caused to be placed below the Shire drain, which hath cost his Majesty some 1000 *li.* all which is utterly lost.

But in further answer to this objection, one argument now may be framed from divers passages in his book concerning his way of drayning, Thus,

That he that shall perswade his Majesty and other great Lords to turne two or three Rivers into one, stopping them of their ancient courses, and carrying them another way to the Sea; telling his Majesty that by this meanes the Fennes will be drayned at a far lesse charge and made the better for habitation, & safer for inundation; And all this, that his Majesty might take him for a skilfull man for devising such a thrifty way, & so allow him the greater wages although by this designe he deprive *Cambridge*, *Ely*, *Linn*, *Peeterborough*, *Wisbitch*, *Spaulding*, and almost all other

Townes

Townes in, and all the Countries about the Fens (except ſome part of *Huntington* Shire) of their Navigation. and wrong all the ſix Counties in their Lands and Meadows, and drown many Townes and Churches, and in concluſion wrong his Majeſty and all other great Lords in ſpending their money in vain, altogether failing of drayning the Fens, ought to bee tryed before he be truſted.

But all theſe particulars may be juſtly charged upon Sir *Cornelius Virmuden* by this his deſigne.

Therefore he ought to be tryed before he be truſted too far.

I ſhall conclude with one argument more in full anſwer to this objection, from the manner of his proceedings, Thus,

That he that to bring his own ends to paſſe, hath not cared though he wrong the poore in ſetting them on work, and not paying them their wages, nor poore travellours in cutting up London Roade, and turning their loaden horſes upon his new bank, where they ſlip in, and are pittifully foyled. Nor other of his Majeſties Subjects, depriving them wholly of their ancient high-way, that of neceſſity they muſt goe at leaſt 4. miles about: Nor others in cutting and drowning their Lands, without giving them any ſatisfaction: Nor his Majeſty, but miſpending his mony, contrary to the truſt repoſed in his promiſes, only to bee revenged on Mr. *Burrell*, not caring though in ſo doing he drown whole Towns and Churches, may alſo attempt to deceive and wrong this Parliament.

But Sir *Cornelius Virmuden* may be juſtly charged with the ſixe former of theſe particulars.

Therfore he may be ſo bold as to attempt the later.

And now ſince Sir *Cornelius* his great and maine

deſigne (which is turning two or three Rivers into one, and putting all thoſe waters in times of greateſt floods betweene bankes ſet at a great diſtance made through mooriſh grounds) is not onely dangerous, as he himſelfe confeſſeth, but is, or will be proved to be ſuch a way as will never drayne the Fennes though all the aforeſaid townes and countries may receive much prejudice by his workes notwithſtanding.

I ſhall here in ſhort lay downe ſome generall rules for drayning of this great levell, in ſuch manner, that although all cannot, yet the greateſt part of the Fennes may be made winter grounds, and wrong none, and ſecure all, and the charge not ſo great but that they will aboundantly requite it.

Let Rivers be made large and deepe, and there will be matter enough ariſing thereout with the indikes to make high bankes, neere on each ſide the Rivers, theſe bankes being made high, and but a ſmall diſtance betweene, will be a ſhelter to the water that ſhall run betwixt them as a hedge, or wall, will ſhelter cattell that lie neere unto them; ſo that the windes will have no power to raiſe violent waves againſt theſe bankes to teare them as the others ſet at a great diſtance; ſo that here is one maine miſchiefe prevented already.

A ſecond miſchiefe will hereby be prevented with a benefit in the roome, for wheras ſuch banks (though placed at a great diſtance) could be made to hold, will reſtraine the waters of their former liberty, and ſo cauſe them to riſe higher in the Medowes above, then formerly, and ſo doe much hurt, ſuch deepe and large Rivers will prevent, for as ſoone as the floud begins to riſe in the Rivers above the Fens, it finds ſuch fall and current paſſage to the ſea, that it is taken

ken downe as it begins to rise, so as that which would have beene but a little flood before, will be no flood now, and so in Summer time will be much advantagious to their Medowes, causing their grasse to be lesse flooted then before.

A third benefit by deepe & large Rivers with banks placed neare the sides is this, when a great flood comes it finds such fall & current passage, that it wil be gone halfe into the Sea, in such time, as without such Rivers it will be climbing up to get above the superfices of the Fens betweene those bankes so farre distant, for untill it be got a loft, it can goe but slowly (as is confessed by Sir *Cornelius*) wanting the fall it had before, and the hassocks, reedes sedge, and long grasse will hinder the passage: and as soone as it is aloft, the windes will have power to raise violent waves which will whinder the bankes to peeces, for it must lie high against those bankes, untill the two Rivers will grind out a passage for it foure miles betweene *Wisbich-Horshooe*, and the Sea, as he saith it must, p. 25. l. 25. but there is a straighter passage before it come out of the Fens besides that.

Now is it not much better that halfe a great flood be sent speedily into the Sea than to lie by the way tearing and breaking the banks?

A fourth benefit is a small flood or rise of water being pent up betwixt narrow bankes, will goe with force down a deepe River, and so scowre and keepe open the Outfalls, when the other loseth a small flood by the way.

Lastly, this way, with some other necessary works as also some sluces & slakers, or inlets (which Sir *Cornelius* saith are remedies worse then the disease) to conveigh the overplus of the great floods into the old

Rivers

Rivers, Meares, and many division dikes, which will all be low, and empty, before such great floods come, and will receive such overplus, and yet the greatest part of the Fens will be dry in the time of the greatest floods; And this way there is not a river nor drain, nor any other work of the late Earle of *Bedfords* but will when it is made as it should, be of good use, and Navigation not so much as hindered in any parts belonging to these Fens, & no man hurt nor endangered in his estate, and the charge to make these workes, lesse then one hundred thousand pounds, provided that there be foure summers for the doing of them, and that the work at no convenient time of the yeare stay or be hindered for want of money. And the charge for maintenance of these workes will be far lesse then Sir *Cornelius* would seeme to make it, for when these bankes are setled too low, as they will in few yeares, the indikes will be growne up, and will need deepening, and that earth will heighten them againe.

The bredth and depth of every River, the heighth and bredth of every Banke, the bigneſſe of every Sluce and Tunnell, and where they should be placed, with an estimate of the charge of every particular work, as also the reasons why any Sluce to be placed upon the River *Owse*, or *Neene*, more then now are, will rather hinder then help Navigation, and will never in respect of drayning, requite for one halfe of the cost, Is set forth in the second part.

FINIS.